

SILVESTRE REYES  
16TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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March 15, 2001

FMSA. 98-3297-29  
98-3298-23  
98-3299-22

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

As you know, on Tuesday, February 6, 2001, a dispute resolution panel ruled that the United States has been at fault by failing to observe the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) mandate which provided for the opening of the U.S.-Mexico border to Mexican trucking on January 1, 2000. More than a year has passed since this ruling, and this provision has yet to be honored by the United States. In order to increase the flow of commerce between Mexico and the United States for the benefit of producers and consumers in both countries, I believe that the trucking provisions of NAFTA should be implemented immediately.

The freeze on cross-border trucking has impacted U.S. agricultural exports to Mexico, which in the year 2000 accounted for almost 12.5 percent of total U.S. agricultural exports and produced a trade surplus of well over \$1 billion. With 85 percent of U.S.-Mexico trade moving by truck, the success of our agricultural exporters hinges on efficient cross-border trucking operations.

The current antiquated border trucking system requires transfers of loads from long-haul trucks to older drayage vehicles for short hauls in the limited "commercial zones" on both sides of the border and then back to long-haul trucks again. With implementation of the cross-border trucking provisions, the drayage trucks will hardly be needed, leaving primarily the long-haul fleet on the road. In addition to improving efficiency, implementation of cross-border trucking provisions would also reduce the congestion and pollution that result from long lines of older drayage trucks stacked up at border crossings.

I understand that safety, illegal immigration and job security are all major concerns of the United States and believe that every assurance must be made so that trucks which are traveling between the two countries are held to the highest applicable United States safety standards and regulations. In addition, to ensure the safety of our citizens, the federal government must increase the number of inspectors along the border. The United States must honor the agreement it made with Mexico in carrying out the provisions of NAFTA. I respectfully request your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Silvestre Reyes  
Member of Congress

CSR/ppl

456645

March 26, 2001

Dear Representative Reyes:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding Mexican trucking on the U.S.-Mexico border.

I have shared your letter with the President's advisors and the appropriate agencies who have been formulating policy recommendations in this area. Your comments are receiving their close and careful attention.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Nicholas E. Calio  
Assistant to the President and  
Director of Legislative Affairs

The Honorable Silveste Reyes  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Bcc w/ copy for appropriate action: NSC  
For Information: DOS

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